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founded by a woman.[1] But more usually the practitioner is a man, called *mara man*,[2] meaning "man of power," or, if we translate *man* as "magic," then literally "magician." We have already seen such an expert magician at work in the making of upright slit gongs.[3] We have seen also the prominent rôle played by a special type of magician called *na-wogh* in charming each Maki-man during the period of feverish activity leading up to the great sacrifice in order to assist them in collecting the correct number of sacrificial boars.[4] Yet another specialist, this time called *mara kur*, is called in to perform, with magic rites, the delicate task of exactly placing the outrigger booms on the hull of a new sea-going canoe,[5] and later to ensure fertility in pigs and successful trading by placing a sow, with due rites, in the bow.[6] At death yet another magician presents charmed leaves to those who have buried the corpse in order that they may purify themselves by washing with these leaves in the sea.[7]

These are but a few instances of the immense variety of magical rites practised by individuals in the interests of the community. Innumerable other rites exist, covering almost every aspect of life, ranging from those of public utility to those applicable only to individuals, and it is safe to say that there is *no* adult member of the community unacquainted with some form of magic which he performs on occasion either for his own benefit or for that of others, in return for a fee commensurate with the importance of his act.

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME MAGICAL ACTS

I have unfortunately no detailed information of how, in the cases cited above, the magicians set about their work. I have, however, a few details from Vao regarding (1) the appeal to ancestral and other ghosts in case of sickness, (2) other cures, and (3) weather magic.

(1) Appeal to Ancestral and Other Ghosts in Case of Sickness

This needs the assistance of a diviner to find out what ghost it is that is causing the sickness.

As we have seen, the only kind of death that is considered as being due to what we should consider "natural" causes is that of an old man who dies in the fulness of time without visible disease. In such a case it is recognised that there is nothing that can be done to prolong life. He duly settles his affairs, as described on p. 536, and his kinsmen's

[1] See pp. 633-4.

[2] Compare Banks Islands and Maewo *gimana*, Santa Cruz *mendeka*, Florida *mane kisu* and *mane nggeha vigona*, all meaning "magician" (Codrington, 3, pp. 195-201).

[3] See pp. 354 ff. [4] See pp. 379, 422. [5] See p. 466.

[6] See p. 467. [7] See p. 560.

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attention is devoted to preparing for the elaborate mortuary rites rather than towards seeking any kind of so-called "supernatural" causation. In all other cases, except where caused by an obvious wound, sickness and death are ascribed to supernatural causes, chief among which are some act of malignant magic (though this is much rarer in the Small Islands than in most other parts of Malekula), or the fact that the sick man has in some way offended the ghost of a departed kinsman or else has been wantonly attacked out of sheer blind revenge by the ghost of some man who has been killed in battle and therefore roams the world in search of victims.

In all such cases a diviner is needed to diagnose the cause, that is to say to discover what sorcerer or ghost is responsible for the sick man's condition. If a sorcerer, the only cure is to persuade him by threats or payment to remove by counter-magic the sickness that he has caused. If a ghost, it must first be discovered what individual ghost it is. For this purpose a practitioner (*mara man*) is called in who, looking at the sick man, sings to himself a special song and by this means finds out what ghost has entered into him. Then he tells the patient who the ghost is.

(*a*) *Ghost of a kinsman.*

In almost all cases, such an initial diagnosis will point to the fact that the ghost (*ta-mat*) in question is that of a departed relative [1] offended at the omission of some ritual act or at the commission of some accidental slight. In this case the practitioner tells the patient whose ghost it is, and says, "I think you must have done him some wrong, to cause him to enter into you in this way." The sick man then thinks it over, and remembers something or other that he has done that must have offended this particular ghost. The practitioner then tells the son or brother of the sick man to bring a leafy branch of the kind called *rumbu log-log*, and when brought places it in the sick man's right hand to hold. When the sick man has held it for a little time, the child or brother takes the branch from him and places it on the grave of the offended ghost, and addresses him, saying, "You have gone into this man; come out from him now. You have made him sick; if you leave him now he will recover." Then he lays a money-mat (*mangau*) on the grave and ties a pig to it as an offering. The size of the pig depends on the importance of the ghost and on the gravity of the disease. If the sick man gets well, the pig is subsequently removed. If he remains sick, the pig is left there until the patient either gets well or dies.

(*b*) *Ghost of one slain in battle.*

It is, however, possible that the diagnosis points to the fact that the ghost that has entered in is that of a man who has died a violent death.

[1] This may be from either side of his family. Instances given include the brother, father, father's father and mother's brother.